

TOWN OF MOREHEAD CITY

SAFE LIFTING POLICY

POLICY:

The Town of Morehead City places a high value on the safety of its employees. The City is committed to providing a safe workplace for all employees and has developed this policy for safe lifting injury prevention to involve management, supervisors, and employees in identifying and eliminating hazards that may develop during our work process.

SCOPE:

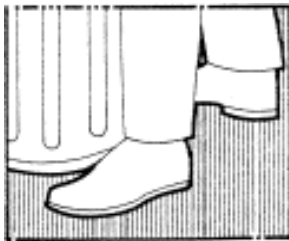
All jobs involve bending, lifting and carrying. Police work, fire fighting and emergency medical care all involve lifting of people, sometimes in life-threatening situations. Although a typical office job may not involve lifting large or especially heavy objects, it is important that employees follow the principles of safe lifting. Small, light loads (i.e., stacks of files, boxes of computer paper, books) can wreak havoc on backs, necks, and shoulders if they use their bodies incorrectly when lifting these objects. Backs are especially vulnerable and most back injuries result from improper lifting. This policy applies to all employees as the City strives to reduce lifting injuries and focus on the prevention of injuries related to improper lifting techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Proper methods of lifting and handling protect against injury. Proper lifting makes work easier. To “think” about what you are going to do before bending to pick up an object can minimize and prevent an injury. Safe lifting techniques, over time, should become routine and habitual. The following, including but not limited to, have been identified as suggested guidelines to safe lifting and handling:

LIFTING:

1. Size up the object/load and check overall conditions. Do not attempt the lift by yourself if the object/load appears to be too heavy or awkward. Check that there is enough space for movement and that the footing is good.
2. Take a good stance and make sure that your balance is good. Feet should be shoulder width apart, with one foot beside and the other foot behind the object that is to be lifted. Make sure you stand on a level area with no oil spots, loose gravel, etc.
3. Bend the knees; do not stoop. Keep the back straight, but not vertical. Tuck chin in so head and neck continue the straight back line.
4. Grip the object/load with the palms of your hands and fingers. The palm grip is more secure. Tuck in the chin again to make certain your back is straight before the lift.
5. Use your body weight to start the object/load moving, then lift by pushing up with the legs. This makes full use of the strongest set of muscles. Push up with the rear foot as you start lift.
6. Keep the arms and elbows close to the body while lifting. Lift steadily and smoothly. Avoid quick, jerky movements.
7. Carry the object/load close to the body. Avoid twisting motions. To change direction, shift your foot position and turn your whole body.



Feet apart, one behind the other.



Back straight, nearly vertical.



Tuck in chin.



Use entire palm for good grip.



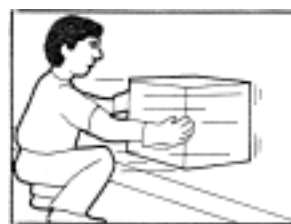
Tuck in arms and elbows.



Start lift with push from rear foot.

UNLOADING:

1. To unload, face the spot you have chosen and lower the object/load slowly.
2. Bend knees and let your legs, not your back, do the work.
3. To deposit the load on a bench or shelf, place it on the edge and push into position. Make sure hands and feet are clear when placing the load.



LIFTING OR LOWERING FROM A HIGH PLACE:

1. Stand on a sturdy ladder or platform. Never stand on the top rung.
2. Lift the object/load in smaller pieces if possible.
3. Push up on the object/load to see how heavy and stable.
4. Slide the object/load as close to yourself before lifting.
5. Grip firmly and slide it down.
6. Avoid risks; get help if needed.



AWKWARD OBJECTS:

1. Bend knees with feet spread.
2. Grip the top outside and bottom inside corners.
3. Use your legs to lift, keeping your back straight.



AVOID TWISTING MOTIONS:

When carrying a load and have to turn, do not twist the upper part of the body. Instead, make your entire body move around the corner or obstacle. Twisting is the most common cause of back injuries, and the easiest to avoid.



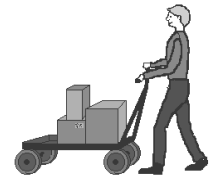
TEAM LIFTING:

- If the weight, shape, or size of an object/load makes the job too much for one person, ask for help.
- Ideally, workers should be of approximately the same size for team lifting.
- One individual needs to be responsible for control of the action to ensure proper coordination. If one worker lifts too soon, shifts the load, or lowers it improperly, either they or the person working with them may be injured.



LIFTING FROM A SEATED POSITION:

- Bending from a seated position and then straightening up places tremendous strain on a back. An unstable chair could slip out from under the person. Instead, have the person stand and move the chair out of the way, squat and stand when retrieving an object from the floor.
- If you do a lot of twisting while lifting, rearrange workspace to avoid this.
- Rotate tasks so that periods of standing alternate with moving or sitting.
- Provide stools or footrests for stationary jobs.
- Store materials at knee level whenever possible instead of on the floor. Make shelves shallower (12-18") to avoid reaching forward to lift the object. Break up loads so each weighs less.
- If you must carry a heavy object/load some distance, consider storing it closer, requesting a table to rest or store it on, or use a hand truck or cart to transport it.



PUSH-DO NOT PULL:

Pulling large objects/loads can be as hard on the back as lifting. Instead, push the object/load. Some back safety techniques to use are:

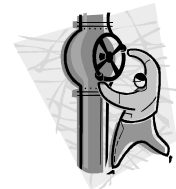
- Stay close to object/load, without leaning forward.
- Tighten your stomach muscles as you push.
- Push with both arms, keeping your elbows bent.
- Turn and avoid twisting the back.
- To move larger items, use another employee to help pull object/load.



For some tasks, such as turning a large valve, you may be tempted to twist.

Some back safety techniques to use are:

- Get close to object. Kneel down on one knee, if necessary.
- Position yourself so you are stable.
- Use arms and legs to do the work, not just the back.



TRAINING:

Each department will be responsible for ensuring that training on safe lifting procedures be conducted for all employees. Initial training will consist of:

- An overview of the Safe Lifting Policy.
- Proper lifting techniques.
- An opportunity to ask questions.

Follow-up training will be conducted as deemed appropriate by the department and when new or modified procedures are introduced.